



# The Interchange

*A newsletter for the employees of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation*

Volume 1, No. 1

Spring 2006

## 5,4,3,2,1 ... it's gone!



Photo: Charles St. Martin

The center span of the Jamestown Bridge explodes above the waters of Narragansett Bay on April 18<sup>th</sup>.

## First Jamestown Bridge demolition a success

**By Charles St. Martin**

The center span of the old Jamestown Bridge is no more, thanks to about 350 explosive charges that cleaved 1,100 feet of steel superstructure from the aging span and sent it cascading into the waters of Narragansett Bay.

The demolition, part of a \$19.5 mil-

lion demolition project to take down the entire span, took place at 10:54 a.m. on April 18<sup>th</sup> and the Jamestown-Verrazzano Bridge was reopened to traffic by noon. The demolition was witnessed by thousands lining the coast on both sides of the West Passage and watched by numerous others on television or on-line. Also, many national

media outlets published and aired stories about it.

Many RIDOT employees were on hand to witness the event, some on a barge provided by the contractor, Cashman Equipment Corp., and others at a private residence close to the bridge that served as the official view-

*Jamestown Bridge, Page 5*

## Roundabouts used for traffic calming

**By Charles St. Martin**

RIDOT plans to make some major strides in traffic safety through the placement of roundabouts at a number of intersections in Rhode Island.

North Providence is somewhat of a

leader in the use of these traffic-calming structures, with one installed at the intersection of Smith Street and Woonasquatucket Avenue and two others planned on Fruit Hill Avenue.

*Roundabouts, Page 9*

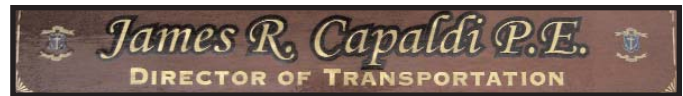
## A new look!

This edition of the newsletter brings many changes, with a new look and new name - one that's meant to describe a diverse forum for news and information of interest to RIDOT employees. Please let us know what you think!

## Inside

- From the Director's Office.....2
- RIDOT hosts USDOT Deputy Secretary Maria Cino.....4
- Ten Mile River Greenway receives national design award..5
- Iway signature bridge update...5
- Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament is back.....7
- RIDOT's team takes top prize at Greenway Challenge.....10

# From the office of ...



Welcome to spring! With all that's been happening, 2006 is going to be a banner year. Actually it's probably going to be one of the most significant years in the history of RIDOT.

The year so far has been good to us, and the mild winter has allowed construction projects to keep on or ahead of schedule. The lack of snow this past winter also meant reduced costs for snow removal, resulting in a \$5 million savings in the winter operations budget. Some of this savings is a result of a new partnership with RIPTA to have them service 50 percent of our winter fleet. Additionally, the Department got rid of outdated equipment and netted \$275,000 through its resale.

The money has allowed us to reinvest in our fleet and pay for increased road cleaning operations. I'd like everyone to congratulate the Maintenance Division for the pride they've shown in the Division, which reflects on the entire Department.

As of this writing, we have completed the first and most difficult detonation of the center truss of the old Jamestown Bridge. Congratulations to all those who were involved and to the contractor for really coming through. Advancing the project was made possible by an accelerated schedule and the mild winter.

Also coming up on the horizon is the floating of the Iway Signature Bridge. Unfortunately the contractor has been delayed in obtaining the barges he needs, a ripple effect from Hurricane Katrina last year. Still, this

should happen by early summer.

This year we'll have the connection of the steel box beam for the Iway, something that will have a dramatic impact on the landscape of the area. This will form a path of "steel rib-



Photo: Chuck Aube

**Director James R. Capaldi, P.E. speaks at the dedication of a rehabilitated section of the Cliff Walk in early May.**

bons" that will really give motorists an impression of what the new highway will look like. We hope to have this work visible by the fall or early winter.

I also want to mention one of the most difficult, but most rewarding projects I've ever participated in, that being the Warwick Intermodal Facility. As Director, I've been heavily involved due to the complexities of the project. There will be a unique change in the landscape, that being a 1,250-foot skywalk connecting the airport to the facility and parking garage. We hope to start construction in the late fall with completion in 2009.

Speaking of trains, we are heading into a unique public-private partner-

ship, with the RIDOT, Department of Administration and the developer working together to design, build and operate a 1,000-car parking garage at Wickford Junction. Work on that should start in 2007, probably take two construction seasons and possibly be done by the end of 2008. Critical to this is the placement of a 1-mile long track and switches to connect to the Northeast Corridor.

For those who live in the southern part of the state and want to take the train to come to work, the price of parking a car and taking the train round trip will be about \$10. That's not counting any passes or discounts that might be offered.

These two projects will bring back train service into the heart of the state and are placed at strategic points to take cars off the highway and reduce traffic congestion.

I just returned from the dedication for the Cliff Walk restoration project. This was done ahead of schedule and under budget. It was a grand celebration. Kudos to Cardi Corp., RIDOT staff and all those involved for creating a beautiful preservation of this historic treasure. Make sure you get out to enjoy it.

I hope you have a good summer and don't forget your sunscreen!

## Summer program available for teenagers at URI

If your kids are following in your footsteps with an interest in transportation – or you're looking at getting them out of your hair for a while over summer break – there's a unique opportunity available to them.

The University of Rhode Island Transportation Center is hosting a pair of two-week non-residential sessions of the National Summer

Transportation Institute. Up to 20 students entering grades 7 to 9 in the fall will be accepted into each program. The sessions run from July 10-21 and Aug. 7-18. Participants will be involved in a wide variety of transportation-related educational activities and field trips. For more information, contact Tory Perrotta at 874-7075. The deadline to apply is May 31<sup>st</sup>.

## The Interchange

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# Daffodil Days drive raises big bucks for cancer society

The RIDOT Daffodil Days team had another banner year of sales, brightening the day with flowers while at the same time netting a major donation for the American Cancer Society.

The total contribution exceeded last year's campaign with \$1,631 raised this year. The majority of the gift came through the sale of 188 bunches of daffodils at \$7 per bunch. The team also sold 11 Teddy bear and flower bunch combinations at \$25. They also received two \$20 Gifts of Hope.

"We would like to thank all who participated in the Daffodil Days campaign this year," noted organizer Jo Taylor. "This total should again put us on the top of the list for contributors for the entire state."

RIDOT's contribution ranked in the top 15 of all businesses and corporations in the state. Over the past 10 years, the Department has raised more than \$12,000.

"I'd just like to thank RIDOT and Jo Taylor for their loyalty to the



Photo: Fran Segerson

**The hard-working members of this year's Daffodil Days event, from left, are: Jo Taylor, Camie Corrente, Elaine Ventura, Anita Tabellario, Elaine Bowie, Peggy Hebert and Linda Pemantell.**

Daffodil Days program and dedication to fighting cancer in Rhode Island," noted Shana Masterson, Income Development Executive for the American Cancer Society's Rhode Island office.

The members of this year's Daffodil

Days team included: Dorothy Bianchi, Elaine Bowie, Debbie Cameron, Camie Corrente, Peggy Hebert, Pamela Moscarelli, Mary Lee Newman, Linda Pemantell, Carol Stravato, Sue Shanley Szala, Anita Tabellario, Jo Taylor and Elaine Ventura.

## Letters, correspondence and good wishes

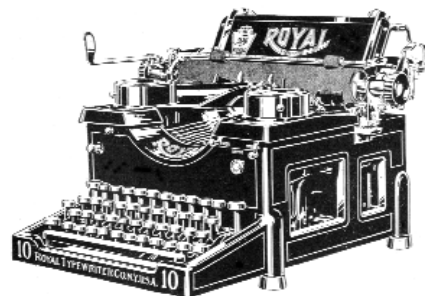
Mr. Capaldi,

I want to thank you for your prompt action in getting the proper personnel out to cut off the metal stubs on the Great Island Road sidewalk in Galilee. I must admit that when I first contacted the Town Clerk and she told me I needed to contact the DOT, I was sure it would be a futile and long process. You have restored my faith in the ability of a state department to get a job done quickly and efficiently. I feel a lot better knowing that no one else will be injured while taking in the lovely sights on that road. I am much obliged to you.

Sincerely,  
Donna M. Graham

e-mail to BikeRI:

I believe that your state has some of the best trails in the nation. Further, you are very progressive and have



been ahead of the neo-bicycling surge. I adore the stretch from Bristol to Providence. So beautiful and scenic and well tended. A pure joy.

Rolf Pottinger  
Willington, Conn.

e-mail to BikeRI:

I will vote for any candidate who continues to strengthen Rhode Island's commitment to become the most bike

friendly state in America. Good job to Rhode Island DOT for supporting bike paths and lanes throughout Rhode Island. The DOT is doing a superb job.

Bob Daily  
Lincoln

A special note:

I wanted to take the time to say thank you to my co-workers for their cards of cheer. There is something to be said for "laughter is the best medicine." It worked. I am back! Thank you to the following for their delicious gifts: My brothers and sisters of Local 400, Harold Omisore and my co-workers in Financial Management. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart. Good health to you all.

John Brock  
Fiscal Management Officer.

# USDOT Deputy Secretary Maria Cino pays a visit

RIDOT hosted U.S. Transportation Deputy Secretary Maria Cino on Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> as part of a nationwide tour to promote energy saving initiatives.

While here, Cino highlighted Rhode Island's efforts to reduce electrical costs by upgrading traffic signals to Light-Emitting Diode (LED) technology (see related story below). She referred to such steps as necessary toward an "energy diet" for the United States.

"America is the most mobile society on earth and that's not going to change," she said.

The event took place at RIDOT's Highway and Bridge Maintenance Headquarters in Warwick. Cino and Governor Donald Carcieri toured the facility prior to a short speaking program and viewing displays on LED technology.



Photos: Chuck Aube

**U.S. Transportation Deputy Secretary Maria Cino (above, center) tours the sign shop at RIDOT's Highway and Bridge Maintenance Headquarters in February. Above, from left, RIDOT Director James R. Capaldi, P.E., Cino, Highway Maintenance Superintendent Kenneth Dionne and Governor Donald Carcieri. Below left, Carcieri, Dionne and Cino tour the garage. Below, Gayle Blasi, an Electrical Inspector, explains new signal switching technology RIDOT is using.**



## Rhode Island reaps major savings with switch to LEDs

A switch to Light-Emitting Diode (LED) technology for traffic signals has resulted in some major cost savings that will pay off with reduced electricity costs and less maintenance.

As of late spring, RIDOT had upgraded 90 percent of the 760 traffic signals in Rhode Island. The remainder will be changed to the low-power LEDs by the end of 2006.

The electricity savings alone amount to about \$450,000 per year.

While the estimated cost of the project is about \$1 million, noted Robert Rocchio, Acting Managing Engineer of RIDOT's Traffic Design Section, RIDOT has received \$515,000 in rebates from National Grid. When coupled with the reduced energy costs, switching to LED technology is a financial and technological wind-fall.

The cost savings also include maintenance. The old incandescent bulb signals only lasted about one year

before they had to be replaced. The LEDs last from five to 10 years, and even if a single LED goes out, each signal indication has multiple LEDs, allowing the light to remain on. This also means improved safety with less time spent working in intersections.

Probably the only drawback to LEDs comes in the winter. The heat from the conventional bulbs worked to melt any wind-driven snow on the lamps. The LEDs run cool and do not offer that benefit.



# FHWA delivers award for Ten Mile bike path

It may be one of the shortest bike paths in the state, but the Ten Mile River Greenway more than makes up for it with a great design, something that attracted the attention of those reviewing the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) biennial Excellence in Highway Design awards.

FHWA representatives in March presented three plaques to mark the path's selection for an honorable mention award. RIDOT Director James R. Capaldi, P.E. accepted an award on behalf of the Department, thanking those who helped design and build it.

"It really is a fantastic bike path," he



Photo: Fran Segerson

**Those involved in making the Ten Mile River Greenway a reality gathered in March to receive plaques for a Federal Highway Administration biennial Excellence in Highway Design award. From left, United International Corp. Vice President Hugh Neenan, Project Manager Michael Weatherston and Owner Bangalore Neelakantiah; Nick Giardino, Contract Administrator for J.H. Lynch & Sons; Lucy Garliauskas, Federal Highway Administration Division Administrator for Rhode Island; RIDOT Chief Engineer Edmund T. Parker Jr., FHWA Rhode Island Assistant Division Administrator Daniel J. Berman; and RIDOT Director James R. Capaldi, P.E.**

said.

Also receiving awards were officials from the design firm of United International Corp. in Johnston and contractor J.H. Lynch & Sons of Cumberland. Presenting the awards

were Lucy Garliauskas, FHWA division Administrator for Rhode Island, and Daniel J. Berman FHWA Assistant Division Administrator.

The award was specific to Segment 5 of the path, a 1.5-mile stretch in East Providence and Pawtucket that opened in 2004. The next round of awards will consider projects completed in 2006.

The goal of the Excellence in

Highway Design award program is "to encourage excellence in the design of highway-related facilities and to recognize projects that contribute effectively to a more pleasing highway experience."

## Demolition of old Jamestown Bridge to continue throughout the year

*Continued from Page 1*

ing point for the media and dignitaries.

RIDOT Chief Engineer Edmund T. Parker Jr. thanked all RIDOT employees who were involved with the project and helped the event come off without a hitch.

"The successful demolition of the bridge was a true team effort by the Department of Transportation," he said. "Special thanks go to some individuals who played key roles, including Kazem Farhoumand and Peter Healey in the permitting and planning processes and Frank Corrao and Wil Hernandez for heading up the construction operations for the project."

RIDOT employees chipped in wherever they were needed during the project, helping to orchestrate a remote

parking and shuttle bus system, carrying in food and lugging out supplies after.

John Jarbeau in the wood shop contributed by building a replica demolition box and plunger, which project engineer David Morgan took to the public viewing area at the University of Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay Campus. There, Morgan assisted a throng of some 2,000 people in counting down the final minutes before detonation.

The next major demolition, of the east and west deck truss sections and a portion of the two main concrete piers, was expected to take place in mid-May. There will be numerous other detonations, only requiring 30-minute closures of the Jamestown-Verrazzano Bridge, throughout the summer and fall. The entire project is slated to wrap up in October.

## Iway Signature Bridge scheduled for July installation

Just as the Jamestown Bridge is being removed from the Rhode Island landscape, another is about to debut.

The Signature Bridge for the Iway, also known as the I-195 Relocation Project, is expected to be floated up Narragansett Bay in July. A majority of the bridge is being built at the Quonset Business Park in North Kingstown.

The bridge will be loaded onto barges using equipment similar to that used when the NASA space shuttles are moved from their hangars to the launch pads. The bridge will be positioned over its support piers and the barges will be sunk and the bridge will be lowered into place and secured.

# Employees roll up their sleeves for a good cause

RIDOT employees came out in force on March 30<sup>th</sup> for the annual blood drive at the R.I. Blood Center, making a life-giving donation and getting administrative leave while doing it.

A total of 65 units of blood was collected. The amount represents nearly 25 percent of all the blood collected daily in Rhode Island. The Blood Center estimates that 240 to 280 pints of blood a day are needed to ensure a safe supply for Rhode Island's hospitals.

All donors were registered for the annual raffle drawing, with a wide range of prizes including many gift certificates to area restaurants. All certificates were donated for the raffle.

Among the top raffle prizes awarded:

- \$150 limousine gift certificate and a \$50 gift certificate to Barnsider Restaurant – Steven Englehard.
- Two tickets to “Dr. Dolittle” at the Providence Performing Arts Center – Bruce Vandale (RIDOT retiree).
- A one-year AAA membership – Karen Smith.



Photos: Chuck Aube

**Giving blood is a piece of cake as these RIDOT employees show. Above, David Squillante, a Highway Maintenance driver at the Portsmouth Facility. Below, Cindy Lee Hayes, an Engineering Technician in the Construction Section.**



- Foxwoods buffet certificates – David Squillante, George Jackvony, John Laroche, John Kelsall and Louis DiStefano.

- \$50 gift certificate to Horton's Seafood – John McCoy.

The following employees won a variety of gifts, such as gift certificates, movies passes, Pawsox tickets, sweat-

shirts and mugs:

John Affleck, Chuck Alves, Joseph Anzelone, Lou Baldassare, Paul Boudreau, Marc Bruneau, Joe Burrell, Jim Capaldi, Dana Carlow, Michael Caroppoli, Jeff Casale, Richard Collum, David Coppotelli, Carolyn Corey (RIDOT retiree), Steve Drager, Ray Dulac, John Fanning, Mark Felag, Brendan Fogarty, Bernie Frezza, Gail Frigon, Jim Garcia, Daniel Gleason, John Glynn, William Grzebien, Ruth Lawrence, Cindy Lee Hayes, Ron Hoyt, Michael Lataille, Patrick Maguire, Michael Mitchell, Bob Moniz, Gina Monteiro, Sandra Morel, Fred Morgan, Pam Moscarelli, Deborah

Munroe, Sandra Nadeau, John Napolitano, Richard Nery, Ed Parker, Joe Pemantell, Mike Penn, John Preiss, Al Proffitt, Jay Proulx (DEM), Paul Pusyka, Paul Pysz, Steven Rego, Michael Scalzi, O. J. Silas, Chris Spencer, Betty Swartz, Paul Sweet, John Trivisono, Stephanie Wilkes (DEM) and Bernie Wilson.

## DBE networking event a hit

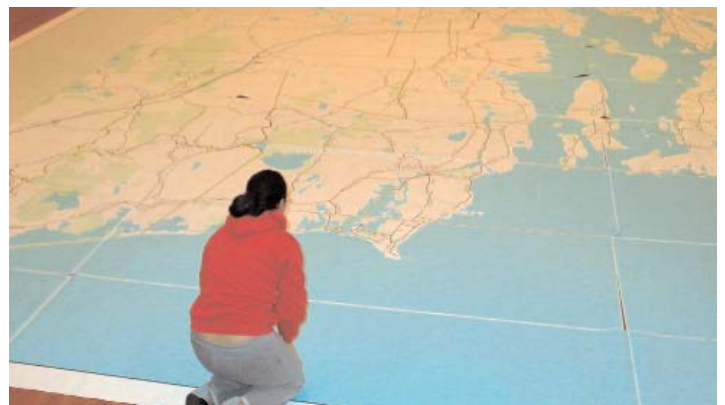
**By Ardena Lee-Fleming**

The Governor's State Room at the State House provided an elegant setting with a big turnout for RIDOT's DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) Networking Event.

The event on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> drew about 150 attendees including 10 prime contractors, 21 DBEs, six supportive service

agencies and/or state departments, and approximately 20 RIDOT staff members.

DBEs had the chance to meet face-to-face with prime contractors for 5-minute “speed dates.” They also had the opportunity to mix and mingle with prime principals, other DBEs, and supportive services contacts. Lots of networking took place, and many new relationships began.



### One really big map

**Sarah Vaz, a Public Affairs Assistant, works on the Biggest Map in the Littlest State Project. Pieces of the 30x40-foot map were decorated by Rhode Island students. It will be reassembled and displayed as part of the celebration for the 50th anniversary of the Interstate System on June 29<sup>th</sup>.**



# Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament returns

Dust off those golf clubs and hit the driving range to get in practice in time for the 11th Annual RIDOT Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament, coming back after a one-year hiatus.

While last year there was no tournament, the effort still awarded more than \$100,000 in scholarships to 22 people. This year's event is set for Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup> with a 9 a.m. shotgun start at Triggs Memorial Golf Course, Chalkstone Avenue, Providence.

The cost is \$150, which includes greens fees, cart, Texas BBQ and prizes. All proceeds will benefit the scholarship fund. The deadline for registration and payment is June 28<sup>th</sup>. All checks should be made payable to RIDOT Memorial Association.

Contact Despina Metakos in the Office of Highway Safety (222-5710) for more information. Registration forms and sponsorship forms are available from her as well. Send payment and forms to Metakos at Office of Highway Safety, 345 Harris Ave., Room 209, Providence, RI 02909.



Photos: Heidi Cote



The weather was great at the last RIDOT Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament in 2004. At left, Deputy Director William "Chuck" Alves nails a 50-foot putt, netting him a \$10,000 prize (he gave half to the scholarship fund). Above, from left, Robert Rocchio, Acting Managing Engineer, and Steven Pristawa, Senior Civil Engineer

## Applications due for scholarships

The RIDOT Memorial Association will award ten scholarships in 2006, including nine RIDOT Memorial Scholarships and one William G. Hackett Memorial Scholarship to a child of a RIDOT employee who passed away while in service to RIDOT.

Applications are currently being accepted through June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Students pursuing higher education are eligible for awards, whether they will attend college, technical or vocational school. Only undergraduates for the 2006-2007 school year are eligible for the awards.

To qualify, applicants must be seniors in high school who will be entering a school of higher learning in the fall of 2006, or current undergraduate students. The application must consist of a one or two page essay, double-spaced, about the applicant. It must

contain the following information: applicant's name, RIDOT parent's name, home address, phone number, e-mail address, name of school attending and status (freshman, sophomore, etc.) and area of study.

Applications must be sent via e-mail to Despina Metakos at [dmetakos@dot.state.ri.us](mailto:dmetakos@dot.state.ri.us). Contact her at 222-5710 with any questions.

Last year's recipients included: Katelyn Affleck, Asad Akinfolarin, David Alves, Melissa Burdon, Joseph Coccia, Melissa Coccia, Jennifer DaRosa, Luke Doyle, David Doyle III, Michael Dulac, Kaitlyn Dulac, Jennifer Farhoumand, Thomas Frezza, Megan Joseph, Rachelle Noorparvar, Kori Lyn Oceau, Christina Pimentel, Stephanie Quintin, Shauna Roberts, Edward Stravato, R.J. Tassonni and Erin Wilkes.

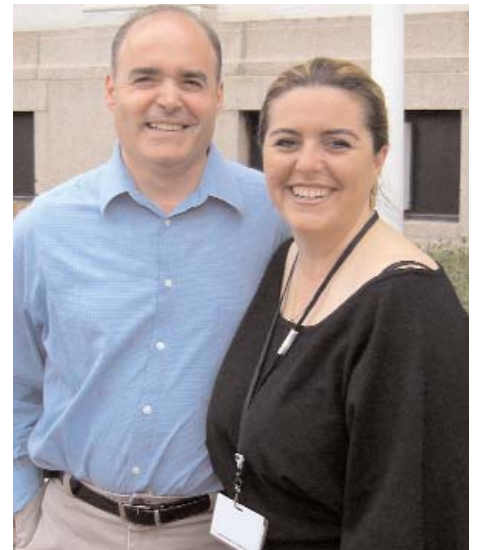


Photo: Charles St. Martin

### On the move

Two long-time RIDOT employees bid adieu to their old offices this spring. Daniel Dibiasio, Chief of Community Affairs (16 years of service), and Despina Metakos, a program manager in Traffic Design (15 years of service), are both taking positions in the Office on Highway Safety on Harris Avenue. Best wishes to them both.

## Busy times for W'RIDOT



Photo: Fran Segerson

**Members of W'RIDOT Group had a lively discussion in February with R.I. First Lady Sue Carcieri about her experiences with heart disease.**

The W'RIDOT Group has had a busy winter and spring, providing female RIDOT employees with some unique experiences.

This group made a \$300 cash donation to Sojourner House for Christmas, and hosted R.I. First Lady Sue Carcieri at its February meeting to talk about heart health issues.

The March meeting featured Barbara Morse Silva of Channel 10, who came to speak about a few of

her favorite feature new segments.

Coming up in May, W'RIDOT is having a training session at the University of Rhode Island's W. Alton Jones Campus in West Greenwich and is having Chef Terranova from Channel 10 whip up some of his specialties in the Construction Conference Room in June. For more information, contact either co-chairwoman, Colleen Kerr (Ext. 4527) or Connie Collette (Ext. 4529).

## Comings and goings: Report from HR

### New hires

#### Construction

Karen P. Capracotta, Renee Casey, Crystal Parent, Michelle A. Robinson, Mark T. Ryan and Dana L. Soucie.

#### Design

Philip M. Kaczorowski and Jessica P. Rodas.

#### Highway & Bridge Maintenance

Steven R. Brown, Lawrence R. Croce, Laurie A. DeMayo, Paul E. Sabatini and Matthew J. Spina.

#### MIS

Keith R. Graham and Andrew T. Nagel.

#### Public Affairs

Charles E. St. Martin III.

### Retirements

#### Construction

Jack A. Scungio Jr.

#### Highway & Bridge Maintenance

Robert W. Madden, Anthony Soscia and Leslie D. Slate.

#### Human Resources

Karen A. St. George.



### Making the grade

John Regan, an intern in the Construction Section, recently passed his E.I.T. Exam. The URI senior graduated this May.



Photo: Charles St. Martin

It's a sure sign of spring when bicycles start showing up at the bike rack next to the main parking lot. The guys above participated in RIDOT's Walk, Bike, or Bus to Work Raffle on April 7<sup>th</sup>. From left, Russell Holt, John Kelsall, Patrick Vu, Paul Petsching, Mark Felag and Tom Bushell (not pictured, Bill Grzebien). Vu won a \$15 gift certificate to Dick's Sporting Goods.



# Regionalization of traffic management a big issue

**By Cynthia Levesque**  
**TMC Manager**

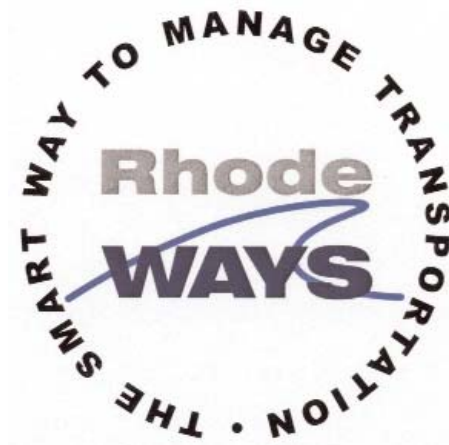
The proximity of Rhode Island to other states has prompted a greater concern from highway leaders to foster regional operations collaboration and coordination.

The Transportation Management Center (TMC), working with Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) personnel in Connecticut and Massachusetts, sited ITS equipment in both of those states. The TMC, as part of RIDOT's standard operations, routinely shares information on roadway conditions with neighboring states and through the I-95 Corridor Coalition's Information Exchange Network with states within the Northeast region. What the Department needs to do now is to think of Rhode Island as a regional system of transportation – a state that is not just a compilation of 39 cities and towns but one that is expected to manage transportation through and to all of those cities and towns.

In the beginning of the RhodeWays program, RIDOT focused on deploying technology within the Providence metropolitan area only. Now the Department is expanding ITS to include most of the state and also our

primary arterial roadways, such as Route 4, Route 24, and Route 114, to name a few. In short, the ITS boundaries are converging upon one another.

Incidents often involve multiple responders representing multiple jurisdictions. An incident on the interstate may seriously impact arterial roadways



that go through multiple communities. An incident in Warwick near T.F. Green State Airport, for example, can impact travel on the interstate and through several communities. The need to think beyond community boundaries as relates to travel in Rhode Island means that RIDOT needs to collaborate, coordinate, plan

and initiate methods for dealing with existing traffic conditions.

During 2005, the Transportation Management Center (TMC) assisted in managing more than 4,000 incidents. These incidents are often one of the primary causes of non-recurring congestion; that is, congestion that does not occur on a daily basis. The incidents were the result of accidents, disabled vehicles, changing weather conditions, and even debris on the road. Some of them, if the consequences to travel weren't so dire, could even be considered as humorous. One such incident included the day elephants attending the circus at the Dunkin' Donuts Center paraded down the street and the road had to be blocked off. Another unusual happening was when a horse being trailer transported got spooked and police officers had to walk the animal from the trailer and down the interstate to a safe area.

Most of the incidents the TMC manages are the result of accidents, rollovers, and residual incidents (accidents caused because of another accident in progress). In all cases, the cost of these incidents to Rhode Island's quality of life, safety, and the economy of the state is high enough for us to take notice.

## Roundabouts gaining in favor as alternative to traffic signals

*Continued from Page 1*

Another dozen or so roundabouts are being considered in urban, suburban and rural settings in Cranston, Exeter, Lincoln, Newport, Portsmouth, Smithfield, South Kingstown, Tiverton and Warwick, according to Robert Rocchio, Acting Managing Engineer of RIDOT's Traffic Design Section.

A roundabout is different than the rotaries the state has now. A roundabout is much smaller, and cars enter at more of a right angle to the circle as opposed to a wider angle. The result is slower speeds and the ability to pro-

vide crosswalks on approach roads. Traffic in a roundabout only moves at about 20 to 25 mph on average.

"The main benefit is safety," he said. "Studies show they reduce the number and severity of accidents."

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has found that using a roundabout instead of a traffic signal reduces accidents by 75 percent. The design eliminates the more dangerous side-impact crashes that can be quite severe at higher speed intersections. Rear-end crashes are reduced as well.

Rhode Island is one of the early adopters of this design, with Colorado and New York taking the lead. New

York is so invested in the idea, Rocchio noted, that a roundabout design is considered first in all intersections where traffic signals are proposed.

Roundabouts are more expensive to install than conventional traffic signals and often require acquiring land around the intersection. They are less expensive, however, when it comes to maintenance and provide a beautification component with central plantings and raised brickwork on the edges.

"It's more aesthetically pleasing without the overhead wires," he said, "and there's nothing to break; there are no moving parts."



## RIDOT's team captures top prize at Greenway Challenge

RIDOT workers captured first place in the Corporate Cup Division at last fall's 2005 Blackstone Valley Greenway Challenge. The 54-mile course in Massachusetts and Rhode Island featured multiple legs of biking, running and paddling. The race returns this September and the team is eager to start training to defend the title. Front row, from left: Brian DeRotto, Jimmy O'Connor and Mike DeRotto. Back row, from left: Joe Baker, David Amalfitano, Ed Szymanski, Ivan McTaggart and Steve Kut.

## Looking for some new tunes? Check out RIDOT employee's latest CD

There's a budding rock star among us.

Phil D'Ercole in Traffic Development recently released his ninth CD under the name Phil Vincent. Titled "Unknown Origin," the album is being

distributed in Europe. D'Ercole collaborated with fellow state employee Paul Colombo from the Construction Section to write and record all 12 songs on the album.

The hard rock songs harken back to

the best tracks from the likes of Foreigner, Dokken and Boston. The album is dedicated to the survivors of The Station nightclub fire.

To learn more, and to listen to sound clips, go to [www.philvincent.com](http://www.philvincent.com).

Printed on recycled paper

James R. Capaldi, P.E.  
Director



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